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ABSTRACT

Surveys administered to 48 state student representatives and 46 chapter advisors attending the 1983 National Future Farmers of American (FFA) Conference on Community Development provided data about the Building Our American Communities Program (BOAC), which originated in 1970 as vocational agriculture's vehicle for high school level community development programs. Findings revealed that: students excelling in BOAC programs do not represent a select segment of the national vocational agriculture population; advisors support other community/professional organizations; community development topics perceived as important by advisors differed from those students identified as the ones they were most capable of doing; typical of community development/volunteer efforts occurring nationally, more BOAC projects are conducted in rural/small towns than central cities or suburban areas; although a majority of projects were conducted in regular high schools by single teacher agriculture departments with 80 or fewer FFA members, exemplary BOAC projects can be conducted in non-traditional settings. Other findings indicated that: school/education, civic facilities, agriculture, and recreation were the most frequent choices for improvement projects; project funding levels ranged from $0 to $802,000 with $2,200 representing the median; advisors took more active roles in planning rather than executing projects; and program involvement increased citizen participation, development of FFA member human relation skills, and public awareness of vocational/agricultural programs. (NEC)

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BUILDING OUR AMERICAN COMMUNITIES:

AN ANALYSIS OF OUTSTANDING PROJECTS CONDUCTED BY

THE FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA

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BUILDING OUR AMERICAN COMMUNITIES:
AN ANALYSIS OF OUTSTANDING PROJECTS
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Community development as a process to improve the quality of life in America has been an area of concern by educators, community development specialists, politicians, economists, sociologists, and the general public for many years. Community development is "the purposive efforts of a group of people to improve their social, economic, and cultural situation of which such should contribute to the overall public good." (Dillman and Hobbs, 1982, p. 264).

Volunteerism is an important factor in the community development process (Stam and Stinson, 1976, p. 24). Smith (1981) defined a volunteer as:

> an individual engaging in behavior that is not bio-socially determined, nor economically necessitated, nor socio-politically compelled, but rather that is essentially (primarily) motivated by the expectation of psychic benefits of some kind as a result of activities that have a market value greater than any remuneration received for such activities. (p. 22-23)

Volunteerism is a form of citizen participation. Cook (1979) stated that "effective citizen participation may contribute to the development of a healthy and stable community . . . where people have a sense of their collective efficacy, confidence and power." (p. 6) Community service activities often represent the avenue chosen by volunteers who wish to participate as concerned citizens of a community. Developing communities is expensive and time comsuming. Therefore, many community officials now turn to the voluntary associations to render services in order to accomplish goals which were previously impossible to reach in view of budgetary constraints. Voluntary associations account for $80 billion of the annual U.S. economy (Filer Commission, 1975).

The sociodemographic characteristics of volunteers indicate that the majority of volunteers have completed high school, earn $10,000 to $14,999 (family of four), are ages 45 to 64 and are most active in small cities with populations of 10,000 to 50,000 people (Hougland and Christenson, 1982, p. 10). Furthermore, those who participate in voluntary farm organizations value most highly political democracy, helping others, and individualism. (1982, p. 11)

Hougland and Christenson (1982) studied voluntary organizations in North Carolina. They found that young people, ages 24 or younger, represented only 6.5% of the voluntary sector (p. 10). Gidron (1978) found that the rewards for volunteers under 25, most of whom were students, were focused on a learning experience. Emmerick (1975) charges teachers with the responsibility of involving students in community activities in order to find real experiences. Specifically these real

experiences include the development of social relations with others in the community as well as the recognition of the community's economic needs with business and industry (Emmerick, 1975).

Vocational agriculture prides itself in attempting to involve its 618,000+ students in real life learning experiences (FFA, 1983). Traditionally, the programs have grown from a small rural community orientation. As of the 1979 statistics, the distribution of students enrolled in agriculture, in institutions with 5 or more vocational programs, was 80.6% male and 19.4% female. The population was also predominately white, about 83% (NLES, 1979). Demographic statistics for FFA members are not available. However, in 1982, 77% of the vocational agriculture students were members of the FFA.

Vocational agriculture's community involvement is often promoted by the Future Farmers of America (FFA), founded in 1928, as community service was included as one of its eleven standing committees (Phipps, 1972). Many accounts of the FFA's service activities have been described over the years. The activities represent the involvement of citizens, the volunteerism of students, and service contributions to the community. However, Koneya (1978) emphatically stated that citizen participation is not community development. Community development is a citizen-originated process that involves citizens identifying needs, setting goals, making decisions, and initiating activities in accordance with their developed plan (Clouse and Cary, 1983, and Koneya, 1978). Service activities are only part of the community development process. Numerous community development activities have been described over the years. The activities represent the involvement of citizens, the volunteerism of students, and service contributions to the community. However, Koneya (1978) emphatically stated that citizen participation is not community development. Community development is a citizen-originated process that involves citizens identifying needs, setting goals, making decisions, and initiating activities in accordance with their developed plan (Clouse and Cary, 1983, and Koneya, 1978). Service activities are only part of the community development process.

The FFA approved the Building Our American Communities Program (BOAC) in 1970 as vocational agriculture's vehicle for a high school level community development program (National FFA Organization, 1971). The purpose of the FFA Community Development activity, BOAC, is to: (a) develop active, experienced, and knowledgeable community leaders and citizens; (b) develop a rural-urban balance by expanding and creating job opportunities, community services, and a better quality of living in rural communities; and (c) improve the social and physical environment in the cities, towns, villages, and farm communities or rural America.

The objectives of the BOAC program are to have: (a) all students involved in planning and implementing a chapter BOAC project; (b) all students understand the principals and fundamentals of community development; (c) youth develop knowledge and skills in community leadership for the present and future; and (d) (all students) become knowledgeable of and familiar with programs and resources of local, state, and federal agencies that help communities solve problems (FFA, 1982).

Lilly Endowment, Inc. of Indianapolis, Indiana, was approved as the initial BOAC program sponsor. The program is supported by the U.S. Department of Education, National Vocational Agricultural Teachers Association, the Farmers Home Administration, Office of Small Community and Rural Development Policy and other agencies within the United States Department of Agriculture. Since 1971, a total of 3,481 FFA chapters have participated in the BOAC program (FFA, BOAC Program Statistics, 1983). R. J. Reynolds Industries, Inc. of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, now sponsors a three-phase BOAC program.

Phase I. BOAC includes an incentive awards program to recognize participating chapters for their community development accomplishments. An awards application must be completed and submitted annually which describes the FFA chapter's community development project goals, objectives, procedures, and accomplishments. Through a process of elimination, BOAC participants compete for area, state, regional, and national awards (National FFA 1983-84-85 BOAC Awards Application, 1982). Since 1971, there have been 19,202 awards presented (FFA, BOAC Program Statistics, 1983).

Phase II. Achievement in Volunteerism was initiated for the purpose of recognizing individual FFA members for their accomplishments in volunteerism. Vocational agricultural FFA members participating in the BOAC program are eligible for the individual achievement award. Recognition is based on knowledge of community development, skills, attitudes, and involvement in the BOAC program. One individual may be recognized at the chapter level, and one is recognized at the state level. Each state has the opportunity to send a student who has earned an Outstanding Achievement in Volunteerism award and the respective FFA chapter advisor to the National Conference on Community Development held in Washington, D.C. Ten national finalists are selected from the participating state representatives. The ten national winners are interviewed, ranked, and presented plaques and monetary awards at the National Conference on Community Development.

Phase III. Research was initiated in 1983 for the purpose of describing the accomplishments of the BOAC program and contributing to the improvement of the BOAC program (FFA, Research Proposal, 1983).

The BOAC program sponsors have also supported the development and dissemination of community development curriculum materials, films, and slide-sound presentations. In addition, several national community development workshops for agricultural educators have been conducted.

Need for the Study

The BOAC program, as vocational agriculture's major community development effort, has been in effect for 13 years. The cumulative financial support of FFA Foundation sponsors during this time period has exceeded $1 million. The investment of individual and group time and resources over the past 13 years must be monumental in view of what is minimally required of FFA chapters in order to participate in the BOAC program. As Voth (1975) states, "we need to know whether or not community development efforts have had any of the effects they are purported to have. We need to know how these efforts are brought about. We need to know why they are not brought about if they are

unsuccessful. Finally, we need to know something about the relationship between their costs and benefits so that we can make intelligent choices among alternatives." (p. 148) Foremost, there is a need to know if BOAC program participants are engaging in the community development process in view of the BOAC program objectives or if this is only a case of volunteers conducting community service activities.

Community development and educational literature is virtually void of research findings which focus on the BOAC program as a major community development effort. Opinion-based literature commends the value of the BOAC program. U.S. Agriculture Secretary John R. Block was quoted as saying:

> Each year, the thousands of FFA members carrying out BOAC projects are responding to emerging issues of the twenty-first century, and preparing for leadership they will be called upon to deliver as adults. They are investigating how their hometowns work, what the needs of their communities are, and how to go about meeting those needs. (Bachman, 1982)

The professions need to know if this is true. They need to know who is participating, what resources have been utilized, which processes have been implemented, and what personal and community outcomes have resulted if intelligent program recommendations are to be made.

As was noted before, BOAC program accomplishments are documented on an annual awards application. From a review of the national BOAC award winning applications, the researcher found inconsistencies in the detail of information reported due to the open-ended structure of the application. This study was needed to develop instrumentation which provided a systematic and consistent means of data collection.

Voth (1975) stated that community development research is also needed to train a new generation of community development practitioners. Only 1,572 of the 8,348 FFA chapters, or 18.5%, participated in the BOAC program in 1982 (FFA, Annual Statistics, November, 1982). This study gathered data beyond the scope of the BOAC application, from exemplary BOAC program participants. The information may be compiled to enlighten BOAC non-participants as to the realm of possibilities for community development activities within the context of varying community, school, teacher, and student situations.

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The primary purpose of the study was to describe characteristics associated with exemplary BOAC program FFA advisors and students, as well as to describe their respective FFA chapters, BOAC projects, and supporting communities.

The following research questions were answered at the conclusion of the study:

1. What are the demographic, academic, and leadership participation characteristics of individuals who were recognized as 1983 Achievement in Volunteerism National Award recipients?
2. What are the demographic, occupational, and leadership characteristics of advisors whose FFA chapters were selected to participate in the National Conference on Community Development?

3. How do the selected advisors perceive the importance of teaching community development topics and of what value do they find the BOAC teaching materials?

4. What are the characteristics and outcomes of exemplary state BOAC projects in relation to their FFA chapter and community context situations?

Methods and Procedures

Methodology

The procedures used to assess the characteristics of students and advisors who conducted exemplary 1983 BOAC projects as well as to describe their FFA chapters, communities, and BOAC chapters were descriptive survey research procedures.

Voth (1975) identified that the first step in conducting community development evaluation was the delineation of a population of communities or of groups. Thus, in accordance with the opinion of Borg (1981) and Van Dalen (1979), the utilization of descriptive survey research procedures in this study facilitated the collection of detailed factual information that described existing phenomena and that resulted in knowing something about the characteristics of the subjects before trying to study more complex research questions.

Limitations of the study. The nature of the descriptive research includes the following methodical assumptions which limited the study:

1. The instrument is only as reliable as the respondents who self report the information.
2. The analysis of data apply only to members of the selected population and generalizations should not be made to all vocational agriculture teachers, students, and their programs.
3. Inferential statistical analysis are not appropriate in describing the population.
4. Finally, the scope of the study was limited to the identification of characteristics of advisor and student participants in the 1983 National FFA Conference on Community Development.

Procedures

Respondent selection. Participants in the study were chosen by virtue of their selection to attend the National FFA Conference on Community Development in 1983. Each state was to send an exemplary BOAC chapter's student representative who had received the Achievement in Volunteerism Award and the respective FFA chapter advisor. Thus, the population consisted of representatives from 48 states who attended the conference. The state representatives included 48 students and 46 FFA chapter advisors.

Instrumentation. Three survey instruments were developed by the researcher and used to collect data for the study. The first one was a questionnaire for students to complete which described their demographic, economic, academic, social leadership involvement, and occupational characteristics. Advisors were asked to complete a second questionnaire which elicited information on their demographic, teaching history, social, economic, and community development curriculum, and BOAC project involvement. The third questionnaire was completed by advisors with the assistance of their students to obtain information about their local community, their FFA chapter, school, and BOAC project.

Items for the instrumentation were selected from a review of educational, sociological and community development literature. The items were assigned to the three separate questionnaires, reviewed for content validity by a panel of three teacher educators, and revised. Three vocational agriculture teachers and ten students field tested the instruments, noting unclear or offensive items. The fourth revised draft was submitted to a panel of experts which included two agriculture teacher educators (one being an expert in community development), the National FFA program specialist, the BOAC research chairman who is also a rural sociologist. Based upon the experts' recommendations, the final set of instruments was developed.

Data sources, collection, and analysis. Data were collected from the participants at the 1983 National FFA Conference on Community Development. Time was provided during a specific conference session for the collection of data. The researcher contacted people who had not completed their questionnaires during the conference alloted time in order to achieve an improved return rate. Other sources of data for the study included the National FFA BOAC program statistics summary for 1971 through 1983 and records of FFA chapter participation and awards levels since 1971 from the National FFA computer center.

Student responses were received from 46 or 95.82% of the student participants. Forty-four of the 46 advisors returned usable questionnaires for a 95.65% return rate. Community questionnaires were completed by 45 participating advisors with the assistance of their students for a return rate of 93.75%.

Three sets of questionnaires were completed. Students completed one survey to provide data regarding program enrollment, years in vocational agriculture, academic standing, personal and family background, occupational history and goals, leadership activities, and outcomes of their community development involvement. A second survey was completed by FFA chapter advisors. Data from this survey provided information regarding the advisor's personal and family background, occupational history, perception of the importance of teaching community development topics, BOAC project involvement, and evaluation of community development teaching materials.

Advisors or the student's informed chaperone along with the student completed a third survey which elicited information about the community, school, FFA chapter, and BOAC project. Specifically, data regarding the following: the elements of the community; school size and type; FFA chapter size and participation levels; and BOAC project years of involvement, scope of group and individual involvement, category of project, project determination process, project outcomes, and project publicity outlets. Measures of central tendency including the mean, median, and mode as well as frequencies and percentages were analyzed where appropriate.

Findings

Students

Students who were recognized as the 1983 National FFA Achievement in Volunteerism Award recipients ranged in age from 16 years old to 20 years old. Of the students who completed the survey, 36.9% were 17 years old and 28.3% were 18 years old. Eighty percent of the students were male and 20% were female. All the students who attended the conference were white. Sixty-seven percent of the students were from families who were engaged in farming, 28% worked in agriculture-related occupations, and 5% were from families whose work was not related to agriculture.

Six agricultural program areas were represented by the students. Prominent programs of enrollment were Agriculture Production (42%), Agriculture Mechanics (21%), Agribusiness (16%), and Horticulture (14%). Forty-six percent of the students were in grade 12 and 26% had graduated and were enrolled in postsecondary education programs. In terms of high school grades, 30.4% of the students earned mostly B's, 26.1% earned about half A's and half B's, and 21.7% earned mostly A's.

The students indicated that collectively they were involved in 15 organizations in addition to the FFA. During their high school careers, 32.6% of the students had held four to six leadership positions in the activities, 23.9% had held one to three, and 21.7% had held seven to ten leadership positions. Fifty percent of the students had been or were currently the FFA President and 76% of them were BOAC chairmen. Twenty-eight of the students' male guardians and 33 of the students' female guardians had not held leadership positions in community organizations.

Advisors

The ages of advisors who were chosen to attend the National Conference on Community Development ranged from 21 to 62 with the mean age being 34.16 years. Forty of the advisors were males, three were females, and all but one was white. Advisors had been teaching vocational agriculture from 0 to 35 years with the mean number of teacher years being 10.14 years, the median was 9, and the mode was 3 years. Advisors had been teaching vocational agriculture at the same school an average of eight years. Twelve month contracts were held by 66.7% of the advisors.

Thirty-seven of the advisors indicated that collectively they had served 79 times in 19 different leadership positions in community and professional organizations, 22 agriculture organizations, 14 civic clubs or community boards, 5 fraternal/social organizations, and 4 veterans organizations.

Community Development Curriculum

Teaching community development was part of 84% of the advisor's curriculum. The degree to which teachers believed community development topics should be included in the vocational agriculture curriculum is indicated in Table 1. On a scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 =

strongly agree, advisors agreed to strongly agreed that all 12 topics which were identified from the manual Community Development--FFA Style should be included. Those topics viewed as being most important to include were: the importance of agriculture in the community, with a mean of 5.52; publicizing BOAC projects, with a mean of 5.48; identifying resources in the community, mean of 5.33; and identifying community needs and problems, with a mean of 5.24.

Thirty-seven advisors evaluated the BOAC teaching and audio visual materials on a scale from 1 = very poor to 5 = very good. The teacher and student manuals, Community Development--FFA Style and the BOAC Chapter Action Guide both received mean ratings of 4 or good. The film Hometown America received the highest mean rating, 4.51. The BOAC Regional and National Winners film received a mean rating of 4.44 followed by Consider the Possibilities (mean 4.35) and The Game Plan: FFA Tackles Community Development (mean 4.32). It was interesting to note that 17 advisors were unfamiliar with the film, The Game Plan: FFA Tackles Community Development.

Table 1

Whether Topics Relating to Community Development Should be Included in the Vo-Ag Curriculum

Topics Ranked by Advisors	Mean
Importance of ag in the community	5.52
Publicizing BOAC projects	5.48
Identifying resources available in the community	5.33
Identifying community needs and problems	5.24
Evaluating program effectiveness in the community	5.17
Deciding upon solutions/planning programs	5.10
Mobilizing resources and implementing solutions	5.10
Exploring alternative solutions to the problem	5.00
Gathering and analyzing data about the problems	4.90
Definition of community	4.86
Identifying influential people in the community	4.83
Definition of community	4.64

Note: Scale: 6 strongly agree 5 4 agree 3 disagree 2 1 strongly disagree

Community

The communities in which the 1983 exemplary BOAC projects served were predominately rural/small town (56%). The population of the communities represented included the following major categories: less

than 2,500 people (26.7%); 2,500 to 5,000 people (15.5%); 5,000 to 10,000 people (13.3%); and 10,000 to 50,000 people (28.9%). The average family income of 49% of the communities were medium ($15,000 - $24,999) and 33% were low/medium ($7,500 - $14,999).

The predominant race of 43 of the communities was white (82.87%). Seventy-three percent of the respondents indicated that their communities could be categorized as farm oriented. They also indicated that their community could be categorized as a small business community (78%).

Schools

Exemplary BOAC projects were primarily conducted by Agriculture programs located in regular high schools offering five or fewer vocational programs (49%). School size was indicated by student population. Twenty percent of the BOAC projects were conducted in schools with less than 250 students; 18% of the schools had 250 to 499 students; 16% had 500 to 749 students; 11% had 750 to 999 students. Also, 16% of the schools had 2,000 or more students. Fifty-three percent of the BOAC projects were directed by one-teacher agriculture departments and 29% by two-teacher departments.

FFA Chapters

FFA chapters which were recognized as exemplary BOAC FFA chapters ranged in size from ten members to 409 members with a median of 80 members and mean of 108. Chapter membership was predominantly male (77.41%). In terms of race, (91.34%) of the FFA members were white, 3.29% were black, 1.34% Hispanic, and 4.03% were classified as other.

A high level of participation in FFA activities was indicated by the number of FFA activities and highest award recognition level. Besides participating in the BOAC program, 25 chapters were awarded national recognition for participation in the chapter contest program, 17 for the national safety program, 13 for participation in national judging contests, and 10 for involvement with national proficiency awards.

Exemplary BOAC Projects

FFA chapters which conducted exemplary BOAC projects had participated in the BOAC program from 1 to 13 years with the mean number of years being 6.24 and the mode being five years. In 1983, 15 of them were recognized as Gold Emblem BOAC chapters, 14 as Silver Emblem chapters, and 19 as Bronze Emblem chapters.

The chapters used two major procedures for determining their 1983 community development project. Eighty-two percent surveyed chapter members to identify needed projects and 82% of the chapters held discussions with key informants. Fifty-eight percent of the chapters conducted community surveys, but only 22% used secondary data, such as census data, in determining needed projects. For 89% of the chapters, the 1983 BOAC project was part of their long-range community development plan.

Table 2

Descriptive Categories for 1983 BOAC projects

Project Category	Frequency	Percentage
School Improvement/Education	29	64
School Grounds Improvement	23	51
Transportation Improvement	4	9
Recreational Project	24	53
Senior Citizen Project	20	44
Handicapped Facility/Service	12	27
Natural Resources Development	16	36
Agricultural Improvement	24	53
Civic Construction Project	26	58
Economic Development Project	16	36
Historical Restoration Project	8	18

Note: Responses may include more than 1 category.
n = 45.

Table 3

Advisor's BOAC Project Involvement

Advisor's Project Leadership Role Required	Frequency	"yes" %
Contacting Community Support		
Individual/Groups	32	74
Evaluating the Project	32	74
Field Trip Arrangement to Scout Projects	31	72
Identifying Potential Projects	29	67
Securing Financial Support	28	65
Completing BOAC State and National Reports	28	65
Publicizing the BOAC Project	25	58
Physically Working on the Project	25	58
Making BOAC Presentations	20	47

Note: Multiple responses could be indicated.
n=43.

The majority of BOAC projects were categorized by the respondents as being school improvement or educational projects (64%). (See Table 2) Fifty-eight percent of the projects involved a civic construction project, 53% were agricultural improvement projects, 53% were recreational projects, and 51% were also categorized as school grounds improvement projects.

Advisors indicated that they were required to assume a leadership role in three major areas in order to get the projects accomplished. As indicated in Table 3, they assumed a leadership role in contacting community support individuals or groups (74%), in evaluating the project (74%), and in arrangint field trips to scout potential projects (72%). Only 47% found it necessary to assume a leadership role in making BOAC presentations.

The involvement of organizations, other individuals, and FFA members is depicted in Table 4. A total of 129 community organizations were involved in 40 of the BOAC projects. For 38 of theprojects reported, 5,738 people other than FFA members contributed a total of 36,869 hours. FFA membe[illegible] involvement was reported for 42 of the BOAC projects. A range of [illegible]58 students were involved in conducting the projects with a total of 3,062 students involved in conducting these exemplary projects. The total number of hours contributed by all members working on a single project, or project "man hours" ranged from 24 hours to 68,000 hours. Total "man hours" contributed by the 3,062 members was 141,685 hours with 988 hours representing the median number of hours required to complete the projects. The mean number of student "man hours" required to complete the single project was 46.27 hours.

Table 4

Number of Organizations, People and Hours Involved in the 1983 BOAC Projects

Number Organizations[a]	Hours Contributed by Others[b]	Other People Involved[b]
129	36,869	5,738
Mean = 3.23 Mode = 5	970.24	151.00

Number of FFA Members Involved[c]	Total Hours Members Contributed to Projects[c]
Range of Students = 12 to 258	Range = 24 to 68,000
Median = 60	Median = 988
Mean = 73	Total project hours = 141,685
Mode = 50	
Total number of students = 3062	

[c]Mean number of student man hours to conduct a project = 46.24

Note. [a]n = 40, [b]n = 38, [c]n = 42.

Forty-three respondents reported BOAC project funding levels. Funding levels ranged from $0 to $802,000 with $2,200 representing the median funding level. (See Table 5) Eleven of the projects did not require any funding. Twelve FFA chapters invested greater than $25 but not more than $2,500 in BOAC projects. Seven chapters invested $2,500 but not more than $5,000, four chapters invested $5,000 but not more than $10,000 in projects, five chapters invested $10,000 but not more than $20,000 in projects, and two chapters invested $20,000 but not more than $30,000. Two chapters invested between $100,000 and $250,000 while one chapter's project represented slightly over $800,000 in funding. It should be noted that these figures represent the total investment of dollars in the exemplary projects. In some instances the value of in kind contributions such as property and materials was included. In some cases, project's phases spanned more than one year. Of the four BOAC projects selected as national regional winners, one did not utilize explicit dollar funding. Forty-three FFA chapters reported that they collectively had contributed $74,995 and utilized $1,293,625 from other funding sources in conducting 1983 BOAC projects.

Table 5

Funding for 1983 Exemplary BOAC Projects

Range ($)[a]	Median
Min. 0	
Max. 802,000.00	$2,200.00
Funding Distribution ($)[a]	**Frequency**
800,000 to 850,000	1
100,000 to 250,000	2
20,000 to 30,000	2
10,000 to 20,000	5
5,000 to 10,000	4
2,500 to 5,000	6
1,000 to 2,500	8
25 to 1,000	4
NONE	11
TOTAL	43

1983 Project Funding	
Dollars of Local Chapters	$ 74,995
Dollars from Other Sources	1,293,625
Grand Total	$1,368,620

Note: n=43

[a]Funding levels are represented for projects which spanned more than one year.

Fourteen of the FFA chapters solicited funding for BOAC projects from civic/business organizations, seven chapters received contributions from individuals in their communities, six received contributions from the school, and six from agricultural organizations in the community. Two chapters used specific projects to raise funds for their BOAC projects, while 22 chapters utilized monetary grants from various local, county, state and national organizations and government sectors.

Project Outcomes

The reporting chapters indicated that the general public (93%), youth organizations (91%), and teenages (91%) were the major benefactors of the BOAC projects. (See Table 6) Three special interest groups were cited the fewest times as major benefactors of the BOAC projects. For example, 58% of the projects were of direct benefit to young farmers and senior citizens, and 44% were beneficial to handicapped citizens.

Table 6

Benefactors of the 1983 BOAC Projects

Group	F**	%
General Public[a]	42	93
Youth Organizations/FFA	41	91
Teenagers	41	91
Educators[a]	33	77
FFA Alumni	34	76
Children	34	76
Business People[a]	32	71
Recreationalists[a]	29	64
Young Farmers	26	58
Senior Citizens	26	58
Handicapped	20	44

Note. n=45, [a]n=44
**Multiple responses to items were possible.

Respondents ranked the importance of nine given BOAC projects outcomes with 1 being the outcome of most importance and 9 being the outcome of least importance. As indicated in Table 7, the three most important outcomes represented benefits to FFA members and the vocational agriculture program. Increasing citizen participation of FFA members was first, increasing the public awareness of the vocational agriculture program was second, and improving FFA members' human relations skills was third. Outcomes which represented benefits to the school and community were ranked fourth through ninth.

Increasing public awareness of the vocational agriculture program was facilitated through publicity efforts related to the BOAC project. Publicity outlets utilized by 39 FFA chapters for informing the public of BOAC activities included the following: newspapers, mean number of articles = 3.46; civic club presentations, mean number = 3.44; radio programs and announcements, mean number 1.64; school board meetings, mean = 1.51 meetings; school assemblies, mean = 1.00 assemblies; and television programs and spot announcement, mean = .85. Other publicity outlets included the use of balloons, posters, displays and fliers (or bulletins).

Table 7

Rankings of the Importance of BOAC Outcomes

Outcome	Rank Order
Increased Citizen Participation of FFA Members	1
Increased Public Awareness of Vo Ag Program	2
Improved Human Relations Skills, FFA Members	3
Increased Citizen Participation of Others in Community	4
Improvement of School/Community Facility	5
Economic Development in the Community	6
Conservation/Development of Natural Resources	7
Improved Community Social/Health Services	8
Improved Agricultural Income	9

Note. Scale: 1=most important, 9=least important
n=41

Table 8 depicts the 11 community development tasks students were to master as a result of learning about community development and performing community development activities. One hundred percent of the students indicated that they could define a community and define community development. Ninety-eight percent could explain the importance of agriculture in their communities and 96% could identify community problems and needs. Thirteen percent of the students indicated that they could not explore problem alternatives/solutions or publicize the community development project, or evaluate program effectiveness in the community. Fifteen percent indicated that they could not mobilize resources and implement solutions.

Table 8

Community Development Competencies/Tasks of Students

Tasks	Can do the Task		
	f	%	no response
Define a Commmunity	46	100	
Define Community Development	46	100	
Explain Ag Importance in Community	45	98	
Identify Community Problems and Needs	44	96	
Gather and Analyze Data About the Problem	42	91	1
Identify Community Resources	42	91	1
Decide Upon Solution/Plan Program	42	91	1
Identify Community Influencial People	41	89	1
Explore Problem Al ernatives/Solutions	40	87	1
Publicize the CD Project	40	87	3
Evaluate Program Effectiveness in Community	40	87	5
Mobilize Resources and Implement Solutions	39	85	1

Note. Multiple responses possible.
n=46.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were made in view of the findings of this study.

1. Based upon the demographic characteristics of the respondents, those who excelled in the BOAC program do not represent a select segment of the national vocational agriculture population.

2. The activities of advisors indicated not only their support for the BOAC program but also for other community and professional organizations.

3. Community development topics perceived by advisors as being important differed from those students identified as being most capable of doing.

4. More projects are being conducted in rural/small towns than central cities or suburban areas typical of the community development and volunteer efforts occurring nationally.

5. Although a majority of the projects were conducted in regular high schools, by single teacher ag departments with 80 or few FFA members, exemplary BOAC projects can be conducted in the non-traditional setting.

6. Through their projects, students and advisors demonstrated concern most often for improving the following sectors of their communities: school/education, civic facilities, agriculture, and recreation. There was less concern with economic development, transportation improvement or special population focus.

7. Advisors had to take a more active leadership role in planning rather than executing the project.

8. Students were involved in planning and implementing BOAC projects. They were acquainted with local, state and federal agencies and worked with resource people beyond the boundary of the local FFA chapter.

9. FFA members and advisors are making sizeable contributions to their communities in terms of volunteer hours and financial investments. However, exemplary BOAC projects are not necessarily dependent upon external funding.

10. Benefits to FFA members and vo ag programs represent the major BOAC project outcomes. These outcomes were increased citizen participation, increased human relations skills of FFA members, and increased public awareness of the vo-ag program.

11. The activities of BOAC participants in this study reflect an attempt to meet the intent of community development through the use of volunteers conducting community service activities. The activities represent one phase of the students' community development experience.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made in view of the findings and conclusions.

1. Exemplary BOAC projects are possible in non-traditional settings. More teachers and students from various backgrounds should be encouraged to participate in order to maximize service to many types and sizes of communities as well as to increase the benefits to more students and agricultural programs.

2. The number of teachers in vocational agricultural departments, the size of the FFA chapter membership, and funding levels should not be considered limiting factors for conducting quality BOAC projects. FFA advisors should be cautioned against making generalizations about who "wins" BOAC awards.

3. The BOAC program should be viewed as an excellent teaching tool which motivates students to learn about the community development process and the needs and resources of their communities. It should provide students the opportunity to develop leadership and human relations skills through their working with others to achieve mutual goals.

4. Teacher inservice activities need to be conducted in order to introduce more teachers to community development curriculum materials and audio visuals. In addition, teachers should be provided with instruction as to what the community development process is, how to go about teaching it, and how the community development program can contribute to the personal development of students and the positive image of the vocational agricultural program.

5. Financial and human resource support for the BOAC program should be continued in order to provide incentive awards and community development materials for program participants. As a multiplier effect takes place, the educational, social and economic returns far exceed the national program investment.

6. Further student needs to be made in the area of vocational agriculture programs' contributions to the development of their communities. This should include a comparative study of participants and nonparticipants in the BOAC program as well as several case studies in order to determine a more accurate impact of the community development efforts. A longitudinal study needs to be implemented in order to determine the long range effects of participation in the BOAC program, if such factors can be isolated in view of the many influential variables that come into account.

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